

REMARKS

In the Office Action, the claims were separated into seven species said to be patentably distinct species of the claimed invention. The species were set forth as follows:

Species I - expandable device with thin and thick struts (claims 1 and 26);

Species II - expandable device with a thick strut and two thin struts;

Species III - expandable device with spring member (claim 11);

Species IV - expandable device when thick strut and thin strut with plurality of flexible joints (claim 18);

Species V - expandable device with thin and thick strut coupled by a ligament (claim 22);

Species VI - apparatus with cells of differing sizes (claims 35 and 36);

Species VII - apparatus with cells having different configurations (claims 37 and 38).

Applicants hereby elect Species I (claims 1 and 26) for prosecution on the merits.

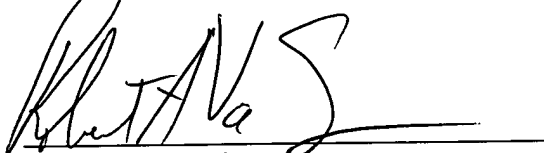
Additionally, each species was divided into subspecies. Species I was divided into five subspecies as follows:

- i. Pin joint;
- ii. Ball and socket joint;
- iii. Locking mechanism;
- iv. Spring member couples thin and thick struts;
- v. Horn spring member couples thin and thick struts.

Applicants hereby elect subspecies iv. (Spring member couples thin and thick struts) for prosecution on the merits. However, applicants reserve the right to add claims to additional species and subspecies that are written in dependent form or otherwise include all the limitations of an allowed generic claim. Currently, at least claims 1, 5, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33 and 34 are readable on the elected species and subspecies. Those claims remain pending in the present application.

The pending claims are believed to be in condition for allowance. However, if the Examiner believes certain amendments are necessary to clarify the present claims or if the Examiner wishes to resolve other issues by way of a telephone conference, the Examiner is kindly invited to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Robert A. Van Someren', written over a horizontal line.

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